

REMARKS

Reconsideration and the timely allowance of the pending claims, in view of the following remarks, are respectfully requested.

In the Office Action dated December 23, 2005, the Examiner rejected claims 17 and 19-22, under 35 U.S.C. §102(b), as allegedly being anticipated by Nabeshima '991 (U.S. Pat. No. 5,587,991).

Applicants gratefully acknowledge the courtesies extended by the Examiner to the Applicants' Counsel as well as the detailed discussions and suggestions provided by the Examiner during the Examiner Interview of May 18, 2005.

The Examiner indicated that based on the discussions, the subject matter of the claims successfully overcome the applied reference. (*See, e.g.*, Interview Summary of May 18, 2005). That is, the Examiner agreed that the Nabeshima '991 reference does not teach or suggest the claimed combination of features recited by the claims.

The Examiner did indicate, however, that the claims, as they currently stand, require some modifications to clarify the claimed subject matter. In response, by this Amendment, Applicants have amended claims 17 and 19-22 to provide a clearer presentation of the claimed subject matter. Applicants submit that no new matter has been introduced.

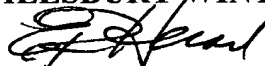
Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request the withdrawal of the rejections, under §102(b), of claims 17 and 19-22.

All matters having been addressed and in view of the foregoing, Applicants respectfully request the entry of this Amendment, the Examiner's reconsideration of this application, and the immediate allowance of pending claims 17 and 19-22.

Applicants' Counsel remains ready to assist the Examiner in any way to facilitate and expedite the prosecution of this matter. Please charge any fees associated with the submission of this paper to Deposit Account Number **033975**, Order No. 008312-0280186. The Commissioner for Patents is also authorized to credit any over payments to the above-referenced Deposit Account.

Respectfully submitted,

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